

K-526

Stephens House (Site)  
Galena  
c. 1789-1793

The Stephens House had stood on the southwest corner of the crossroads of present day Galena. Originally part of a tract called McCay's purchase and owned by Robert Maxwell, Sr., this lot and others were sold by Maxwell in the 1780's and 90's. At the time of its first transfer to Garrett Vansant in 1789<sup>1</sup> the purchase price was a mere @50. When he sold the property just four years later to Joshua Vansant the price had increased to @200, a likely indication that the house had been constructed during his ownership. Between the 1780's and the 1840's there were several owners, but when the Stephens family purchased the property in 1843,<sup>2</sup> they would continue to own it for a hundred years.

The sole existing photograph of the Stephens House was taken by the HABS photographer in the 1930's. The house appears to have been a twin to the former Chesterville Hotel located on the corner of that crossroad village. The form and fenestration of the building suggests that it had a hall-parlor plan with attached kitchen, all under the same roof. The one room kitchen addition on the end of the house may date from 1796-1799 when there was another increase in the purchase price.<sup>3</sup> Soon after the photograph was taken, the house was demolished.

1. Land Records, Lib. DD 5, fol. 381.
2. Land Records, Lib. JKH 1, fol. 824.
3. Land Records, Lib. BC 4, fol. 411.

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. K-526

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Vansant House

and/or common Stephens House (site)

**2. Location**

street & number Augustine Herman Highway ☐ not for publication

city, town Galena ☐ vicinity of congressional district 1st

state Maryland county Kent

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Restaurant

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name William E. Lowman

street & number P.O. Box 57 telephone no.: 410-648-5776

city, town Galena state and zip code MD 21635

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber MLM 1

street & number Cross Street folio 382

city, town Chestertown state MD

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title Historic American Building Survey

date ☒ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

## 7. Description

Survey No. K-526

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☒ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Billy's Seafood Restaurant now occupies the site of the Stephens House at Galena. The house was demolished soon after the photo was taken for the Historic American Building Survey in the 1930's. From the single photo it is possible to hypothesize its similarities to the "Chesterville Hotel" which has also been lost.

When the photo was taken, the five bay building retained its beaded siding and three 'A' roof dormers. The placement of the chimney at about one third from the west end was identical to the Chesterville Hotel. That and the position of the doors and windows suggests the building had a hall-parlor plan plus a one-room kitchen on the west end. The entire building was on the same level and had the same roof line. Judging from the chain of title, the house was constructed between 1789 and 1793.

The form and general size of the house was repeated in another Galena House, the Orlando Sutton House, which has survived to the present day.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. K-526

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates    btn 1789-1793    Builder/Architect    Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Stephens House is an important document of a type house built in Kent County villages by tradesmen at the end of the 18th Century. Its owners were not influential citizens of the County, but their work contributed to the economy of the area and made Galena the thriving community that it became by the end of the 19th Century.

Robert Maxwell, Sr., Esquire owned the farm on the southwest corner of Downes Crossroads, called McCay's Purchase. He sold off lots along the road to Chestertown, this one being about the sixth. This  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre lot he sold to Garrett Vansant, a cooper, in 1789 for £50, adjoining the lot of Christopher Vansant. Garrett sold his lot with house for £200 in 1793 to Joshua Vansant, a farmer. Isaac Woodland, a blacksmith purchased the property in 1796 for the same amount of money, and by the time he sold in 1799 he was living in Cecil County.

William Dinsmore a merchant paid £335 for the property but died within a year. There is no indication in the deed for the substantial increase in price from three years earlier. The house and half acre lot remained in Dinsmore's estate and was assessed in 1822 for \$300, the same year his heirs sold it to Lambert Sappington, a farmer.

Samuel Sappington took the property as the oldest heir of Lambert, in 1834, but by 1838 he had fallen behind in his taxes. In 1843 the house was sold to the highest bidder, to pay the back taxes of \$8.87. Julia Anna, the wife of Captain T.N. Stephens purchase the house and it remained in her family until it was again sold for taxes in 1943.

The house was in the state of repair indicted in the HABS photo and was demolished by the new owner Frank H. Ruth. Since that time there have been five owners and two businesses: a service station and a restaurant.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-526

Kent County Land Records &amp; Wills

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Michael Bourne		
organization	Historical Society of Kent County, Inc.	date	March 1995
street & number	P.O. Box 663	telephone	410-778-3499
city or town	Chestertown	state	Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

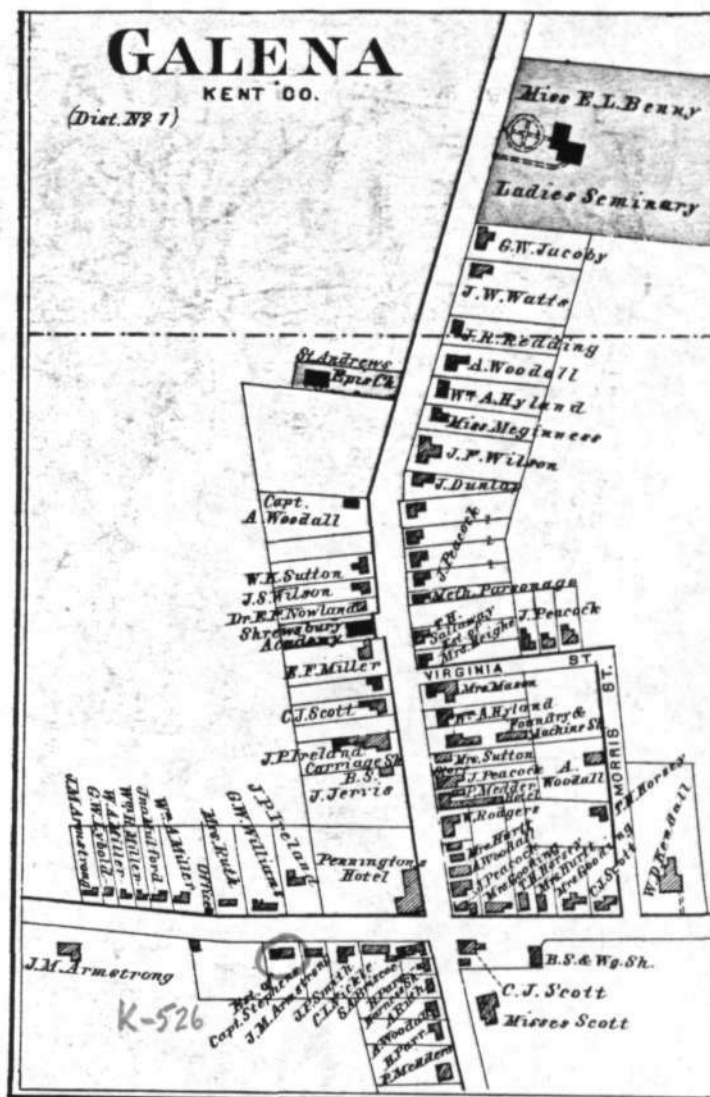




e-maker. Re-  
 at reasonable  
 Millington Aca-  
 Millington Saw  
 soft Lumber for  
 ry Goods, No-  
 &c., &c.

**T. H. CRANE**, Physician and Surgeon. Office and  
 Res. Millington.  
**JOHN BOTTOMLY**, Butcher. Fresh Meats con-  
 stantly on hand.  
**W. S. GREEN**, Tinner, and Dealer in Tinware and  
 Stoves of the latest and best Patterns.  
**JAMES L. WILLIS**, Proprietor of Millington Ho-  
 tel. Best Accommodations for Man and Horse.  
 Travelers transferred to any part of Kent, Queen  
 Anne Counties and south part of Delaware.

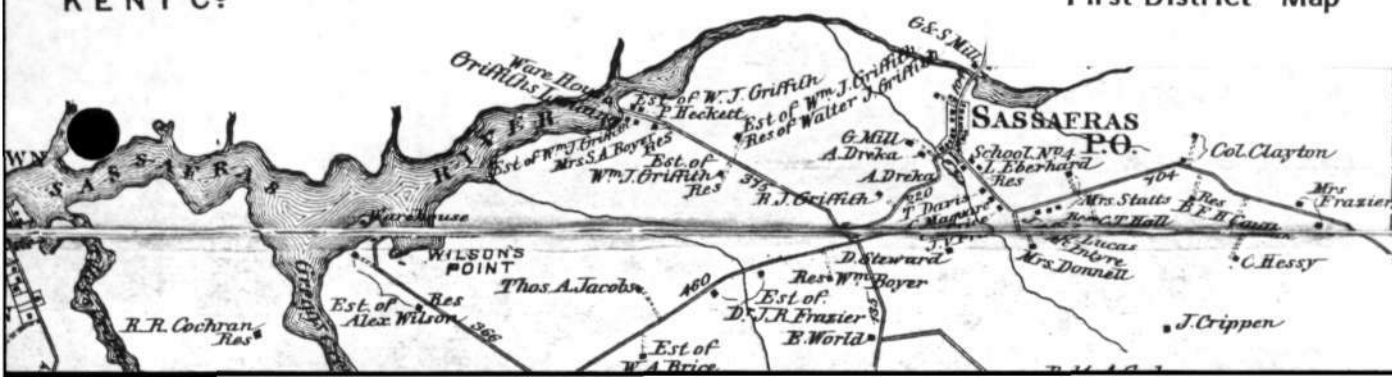
# T DISTRICT MILLINGTON KENT CO.

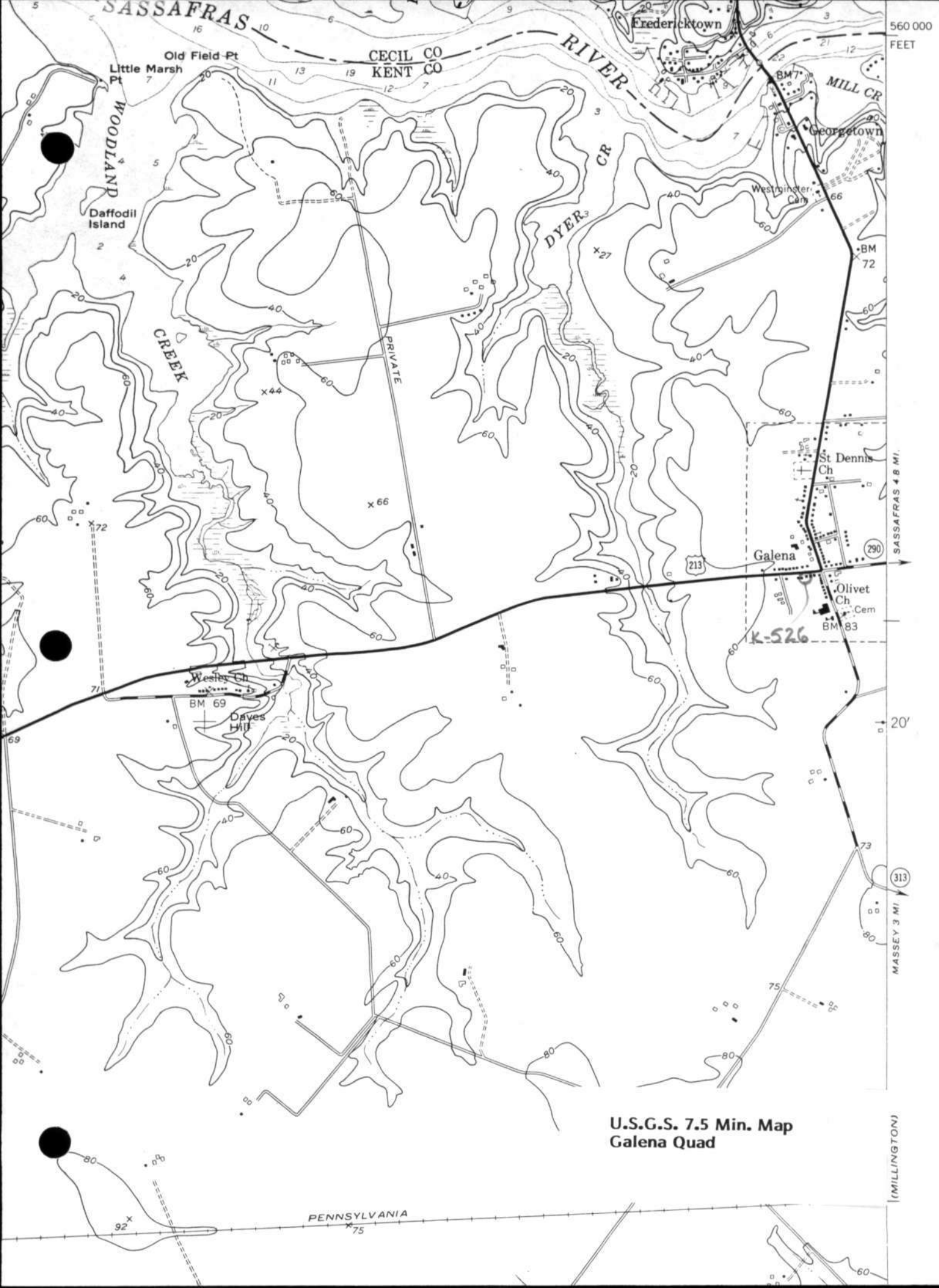


**GALENA BUSINESS REFERENCES.**  
**GEORGE STEEL**, Manufacturer of, and Dealer in  
 Pumps of all kinds. Also Repairing done at short  
 Notice.  
**GEO. T. MCCAULEY**, Dealer in Groceries and  
 Provisions. All kinds of Salt Meats, Fish, Flour,  
 Meal, Choice Cigars, Tobacco, &c., very low for  
 cash.  
**HENRY PARR**, Manufacturer and Dealer in Sad-  
 dles, Harness, Whips, Trunks, Valises, &c.  
**JOHN C. JONES**, Dealer in Dry Goods, Notions,  
 Boots, Shoes, Groceries and all kinds of Goods kept  
 in a first-class Store. Motto: "Quick sales and  
 small profits."  
**W. H. PENNINGTON**, Proprietor of "Penning-  
 ton Hotel."  
**R. E. KNIGHTON**, Manufacturer of Tin and Sheet-  
 Ironware, Stove Repairing, &c. Stoves a specialty.  
 Keeps constantly on hand the latest Improvements,  
 and sells at City Prices. Call and examine Stock.  
**THOMAS H. HORSEY**, Dealer in Dry Goods,  
 Notions, Gents' Furnishing Goods and General  
 Merchandise.

**G. W. WILLIAMS**, Blacksmith and Carriage-ma-  
 ker. Horse-shoeing and Repairing neatly and  
 promptly done.  
**G. W. LYBOLD**, Machinist and Engineer. Also  
 Agent for Buckeye Reapers and Mowers and Sweep  
 Stake Threshers, Eclipse Engine, Birdal Clover  
 Huller, Ealieu Rake and Agricultural Implements  
 of all kinds. Engines repaired at short notice and  
 reasonable terms.  
**Miss E. L. BENNY**, Proprietor of GALENA SEMI-  
 NARY, Home for Young Ladies. Miss E. L. Benny,  
 Principal, assisted by a well-qualified corps of  
 Teachers. Course thorough, and Expenses moderate.  
**J. W. LATIMEN**, Physician and Surgeon.  
**E. G. IRVIN**, Minister in M. E. Church.  
**GEORGE E. CASEY**, Wheelwright. Wheel-  
 righting done in all its Branches. Carriage-paint-  
 ing a specialty. Shop at Lambson's Station. P. O.  
 Galena.

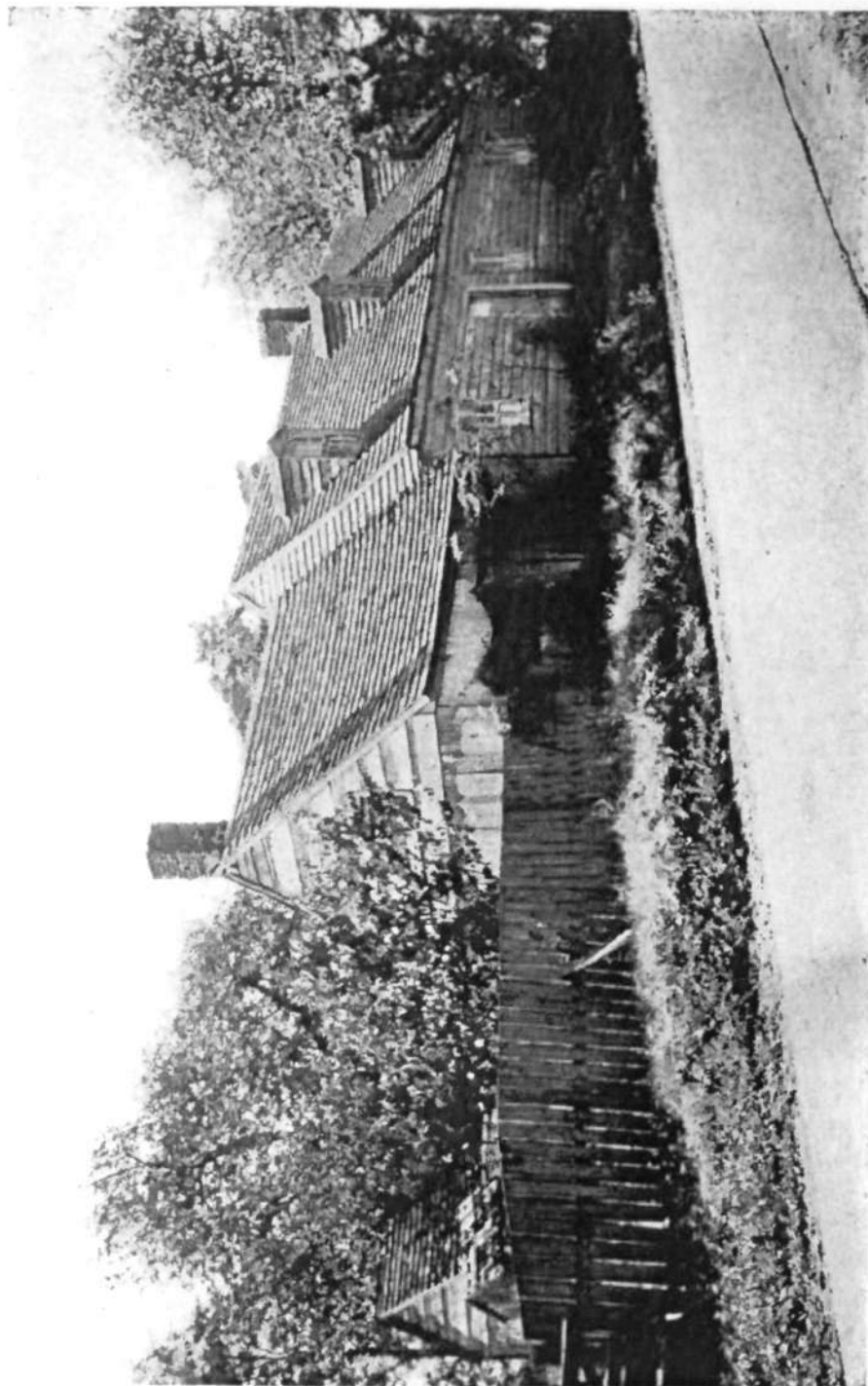
Lake, Griffing, Stevenson  
 Atlas of Kent Co., 1877  
 First District Map





U.S.G.S. 7.5 Min. Map  
Galena Quad

(MILLINGTON)



STEPHENS HOUSE, GALENA, MARYLAND.

Ziegler, Charles A. "An Architectural Monograph on Colonial Architecture of the Eastern Shore of Maryland." The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs. v. II n. 6 (Dec. 1916): page 8.





Stephens House K-526  
Galena HABS